

## **Government Administration and Elections Committee - February 22, 2023 Public Hearing**

Dear Co-Chairs Senator Flexer and Rep. Blumenthal, Vice-Chairs Sen. Slap and Rep. Morin-Bello, Ranking Members Sen. Sampson and Rep. Mastrofrancesco, and Distinguished Members of the GAE Committee,

As Chair of the Democratic City Committee of Stamford, I write in support of the following bills:

- *S.B. No. 1057, An Act Concerning the Secretary of the State and Early Voting.*
- *S.B. No. 1064, An Act Concerning the Implementation of Early Voting.*
- *H.B. No. 5004, An Act Implementing Early Voting.*
- *H.J. No. 1, Resolution Approving a State Constitutional Amendment to Allow No-Excuse Absentee Voting.*
- *S.J. No. 29, Resolution Approving an Amendment to the State Constitution to Allow No-Excuse Absentee Voting.*

The Stamford Democratic City Committee worked hard in 2022 educating voters about the benefits of early voting and as a result, 68% of voters in Stamford voted to change our State Constitution to allow for early voting. Stamford, with nearly 75,000 registered voters, consistently turns out the highest numbers of votes in state elections, including the highest number of absentee ballots above all other large cities in Connecticut.

Since 2020, Stamford has also had five special elections and three primary elections. In the 2022 general election, 169 ballots were rejected and another 57 were returned late, which in a close race could affect the outcome. We are constantly in election mode working to Get Out the Vote, in a City that has over 20 polling locations and an extremely diverse voting population. In order to provide for more voter participation, the following provisions in the bills are of the utmost importance:

- *Provide ten days to two weeks of Early Voting, including early morning, evenings, and multiple weekends.*
- *Early Voting should apply to all elections - general, primaries, special, municipal, and referendums.*
- *Convenient polling locations for the elderly, working families, and disabled populations. Locations should be accessible by public transportation.*
- *Minimum number of polling locations based on population to guarantee fair access*
- *Allow same-day registration during the Early Voting period.*
- *Implement Early Voting in 2023 to prepare for the 2024 Federal elections.*
- *Allow the Voters in CT to amend the constitution to allow for no-excuse absentee voting and provide time for curing ballots.*

Most importantly, in order to have a successful implementation and modernize our voting procedures, the state must allocate funds to municipalities for early voting - including staffing of polling locations, voter education/outreach, and the purchase of computers/tablets along with the infrastructure required to update election procedures.

Thank you,

Robin Druckman  
Chair, Stamford Democratic City Committee